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AUTHOR McLeod, Susan H.
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ABSTRACT

The most used model for empirical research on the writing process is based on cognitive psychology and does not take into account affective phenomena, although it has long been recognized that affect (that is, the noncognitive aspects of mental activity) plays a large role in writing and learning to write. To understand the complete picture, it is necessary to explore how cognitive, affective, and social elements interact as people write. A group of students are followed through a semester of writing assignments. Their progress is tracked and the affective elements relevant to their writing are examined. Suggested definitions for terms in the affective domain are provided. To provide a narrative structure, a simulated semester has been constructed which condenses the year and a half of the study into one semester and creates a class that is a composite drawn from seven classrooms over 3 semesters. The book's discussions of pedagogy, while meant to have practical value, are suggestive rather than prescriptive--the goal is to help teachers see their practice in a new way. Of particular interest is the discussion of teacher affect/effect. Both the issue of the "Pygmalion effect" (students becoming better because the teacher believes they are) and the more common opposite, the "golem effect" (students becoming less capable because their teachers view them that way) are considered. (NKA)

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